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Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1433

UNCLAS GUATEMALA 3263

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: BEXP, GT
SUBJ: THIRD QUARTER CAP STATUS REPORT

REF: GUATEMALA 0959

1. ALL CAMPAIGNS UNDER FY-76 CAP BEING IMPLEMENTED AS PLANNED AND ON SCHEDULE. EMBASSY BELIEVES FOLLOWING COMMENTS SHOULD BE OF INTEREST TO CAG.

2. CAMPAIGN NO. 1: BUILDING MATERIALS

THIS CAMPAIGN HAS TAKEN ON EVEN GREATER IMPORTANCE SINCE EARTHQUAKE OF FEBRUARY 4. PRIOR TO EARTHQUAKE AND AFTER WE HEARD IT WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE FOR USE TO BE INCLUDED IN PANAMA, NICARAGUA AND HONDURAS CATALOG SHOW ON CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT, WE REQUESTED AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA TO SEND US THEIR CATALOGS SO WE COULD PUT ON LOCALLY ORGANIZED SHOW. SHORTLY AFTER EARTHQUAKE AND IN ORDER TO SPEND UP TIMETABLE FOR SHOW, WE REQUESTED AMEMBASSY PANA TO SEND US THEIR CATALOGS, WHICH THEY PROMPTLY DID. CATALOG SHOW WAS HELD AT EMBASSY APRIL 2, 5-9, 1976 TO WHICH WE HAD OVER 100 VISITORS, 46 OF WHOM REGISTERED AND FROM WHOM WE EXPECT TO SUBMIT 23 PTOS. GUATEMALA'S LARGEST INVESTMENT FOR SOME YEARS WILL BE IN HOUSING AND WE WILL CONTINUE TO PURSUE TRADE OPPORTUNITIES IN THIS FIELD AS THE NO. 1 PRIORITY IN OUR CAP.

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3. CAMPAIGN NO. 5: GOG INVESTMENT PROJECTS

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SINCE FY-76 CAP WAS INITIATED, COMMERICAL SECTION HAS GIVEN GREATER PRIORITY TO THIS CAMPAIGN THAN WAS ORIGINALLY CONTEMPLATED, WARRENTED WE FELT BY $350-400 MILLION IN INVESTMENTS PLANNED BY GOG IN POWER GENERATION AND TELEPHONE EQUIPMENT OVER NEXT SEVERAL YEARS. WE DECIDED OUR ROLE IN INCREASING LIKELIHOOD OF U.S. FIRMS WINNING CONTRACTS WOULD BE IN GETTING LARGE NUMBER OF U.S. FIRMS INTERESTED IN BIDDING ON THESE PROJECTS. THEREFORE, WE EXTENSIVELY REPORTED ON THEM TO USDOC/MEPD AND WROTE TO DOZENS OF U.S. CONSTRUCTION FIRMS AND EQUIPMENT SUPPLIERS, LITERALLY EVERY FIRM WE THOUGHT COULD POTENTIALLY BE INTERESTED. WITH PREQUALIFICATION FOR HYDROELECTRIC POWER PROJECTS NOW CLOSED AND TELEPHONE BIDS IN, WE CAN BEGIN TO SEE RESULTS THESE EFFORTS. UNFORTUNATELY, THEY APPEAR MIXED. FOR CHIXOY AND AGUACAPA HYDROELECTRIC PROJECTS, OF 75 FIRMS WHICH PREQUALIFIED, ONLY 14 WERE U.S. MORE DISCOURAGING, WE UNDERSTAND THAT OF 8 U.S. CONTRACTORS PREQUALIFIED FOR CONSTRUCTION PHASES, ONLY TWO MAY BE PLANNING TO BID. OUR CONCLUSION IS THAT U.S. CONSTRUCTION FIRMS MUST NOT BE VERY HUNGRY FOR FOREIGN BUSINESS RIGHT NOW.

AS FOR TELEPHONE EQUIPMENT, THE PICTURE IS BRIGHTER. U.S. FIRMS HAVE LOW BID ON FOUR OR FIVE SEGMENTS OF 26 MILLION DOLLARS IN PLANNED PURCHASES COVERING ORDERS FOR TELEPRINTERS, PHONE SETS, SWITCHING EQUIPMENT AND CABLE.

4. OTHER MAJOR PROJECTS MENTIONED IN CAP INCLUDING RAILROAD EQUIPMENT AND PORT OF SANTO TOMAS HAVE NOT YET REACHED BIDDING STAGES. OVER REMAINDED OF FY-76 WE WILL BE REPORTING ON MAJOR PROJECT OPPORTUNITIES CREATED BY EARTHQUAKE, INCLUDING PORT AND ROAD WORK.
ANDREWS

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